

1474 c 5

C E R T A I N
A R T I C L E S
Proposed to the
S E R I O U S C O N S I D E R A T I O N ,
O F T H E
C o u r t o f A s s i s t a n t s ,
O F T H E
W O R S H I P P U L C O M P A N Y
O F
S A L T E R S in *London*, &c.

By J O H N F R E E, D. D.
*Vicar of EAST-COKER in Somersetshire, Thursday
Lecturer of St. MARY-HILL, London, and
Lecturer of NEWINGTON in Surry.*

—*Have Salt in yourselves, and have Peace one
with another.* *Mark ix. 50.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for E. OWEN, in *Holborn*, for the AUTHOR ;
And sold by Mr. SANDBY, at the *Ship*, opposite St. Dunstan's
Church in *Fleet-street*, Mrs. COOK, at the *Royal Exchange*,
Mr. PARKER and Mr. PRINCE, Booksellers in *Oxford*.

M,DCC,LVIII.

[Price SIX-PENCE.]

B I L D I C H A

mit einer

ersten Abtheilung

aus dem

Archiv des

Staatsarchivs

in der

Stadt Görlitz



[1]

C E R T A I N
A R T I C L E S

Proposed to the

Serious Consideration of the Court of Assistants of the worshipful Company of the Salters, relative to the Application of a Methodist for their Votes and Interest, in Order to his being promoted to the Tuesday's Lectureship at St. Dunstan's in the East, at present in the Possession of the Revd. Mr. B——n, he being still alive, and by God's Favour likely to continue to live.

GENTLEMEN,

AS it is pretty evident, that most, if not all of you have been applied to, for the Purpose above-mentioned, and some of you may perhaps, have unwarily promised your Votes to an avowed *Methodist*, who by a *strange Connivance* continues to act as *Curate* in a *Village* near LONDON : I beg Leave, as a Person concerned both for your Honour;

Honour, and the publick Good, to address you, as I conceive you will act, in one or other of the following Capacities; and to call upon you either.

Firſt. As Members of the eſtabliſhed Church,

- Or Secondly, As Christians of ſome Deno-mination or other,

Or Thirdly, As People concerned for the Honour of God,

Or Fourthly, As good Subjects to the State,

Or Fifthly, As Men of common Prudence, to attend to the following Articles, which I shall propose to your Consideration.

ART. I. If you are Members of the *Church of England*, conſider, *Firſt.*

How you can consistently with that Profession be concerned in promoting a Person to a Place in the *Church*, whose whole *Miniftry* is an open and avowed Oppofition, to one of the fundamental Articles of our Religion?

For the 20th Article plainly declares —
 “ that it is not lawful for the *Church* to ordain
 “ any Thing, that is contrary to God’s Word
 “ written, neither may it ſo expound one
 “ Place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to
 “ another.”

"another" — And yet it is notorious, that the *Methodists*, under the *Maske* of being true Sons to the Church, do ever explain the Word *Faith* as it stands in * some of St. *Paul's* Writings, in a Manner so different from the clear Declaration of St. *James*, as to make the Doctrine of one Apostle a direct and flat Contradiction to the other.

For St. *James* declares, that "Faith without Works is dead". Ch. ii. 17.

Now what is *Dead* produces nothing. Therefore a Faith, that is dead, as it produces *nothing*, cannot produce *SALVATION*: But St. *James* affirms, that a Faith *without Works* is dead; therefore it is clearly St. *James's* Meaning, that a Faith without Works (that is, without *Virtue* and *Morality*) can never produce Salvation.

But the *Methodists* so explain St. *Paul*, in some *obscure* Passages, as to affirm it to be the Doctrine of *Scripture*, that a Man shall be saved by *Faith alone*, *exclusive* of good Works; by which we mean *VIRTUE* and *MORALITY*: Therefore according to them,

FAITH

* The Epistles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, where the Word *Faith* generally stands for the *whole* of the Christian Religion, while the Word *alone* excludes only the Observation of *Jewish Ceremonies*: As the Word *Works* means not Works of *Morality*, but the *ceremonial* Part of *Jewish Law*. This is a Key to the Whole.

FAITH alone, without VIRTUE and MORALITY will produce SALVATION. Now this is a direct Contradiction to the Doctrine of St James, at the same Time that it is " so to expand one Place of Scripture, as to make it repugnant to another". And therefore an open and scandalous Opposition to the 20th Article of the *Church of England*, open I say because it is the perpetual Theme of the Methodists.---It is not only the Doctrine, which gives them the Opportunity of *creeping into Houses and of leading Captive*, * they know whom: But it is also the tumultuous Subject of their publick *Declamations*, the old *Leaven*, which puts their *Mobs* in a Ferment, and daily produces, as the Humours operate, their hollow Groans, or insolent Exclamations.

It is evident then, that the *whole Ministry* of a Person so employed, is an *open and avowed Opposition* to one of the fundamental *Articles* of the Church of ENGLAND; and therefore as Members of that Church you cannot consistently be concerned in the Promotion of such a Person.

Nor Secondly, If you are sincerely Christians of any Denomination whatsoever.

For consider, in that *Character*, if the Religion of Christ, or the Holy Scripture, which publishes that Religion, be *chargeable*

with

* 2 Tim. iii, 6 and 7.

with *Contradictions*.—what must be the Consequence?—Why—“that this *Religion* “*is not true*”.—For *Truth* is always *uniform*; and therefore we receive the *Scripture* as the *uniform Word of God*; because by its being *Uniform* we think it *true*: But the Man that charges it with *Contradiction*, charges it with *Falshood*. For not only every good *Logician* but every Man of good *Sense* must know, that one Side of a *Contradiction* must be *false*: And therefore he, who makes the *Scripture* contradict itself, charges it, in one Part, or other, with *Falshood*.

Pray what could a *Mahomedan*, or *Infidel*, or the *Devil* himself do more than load it with *Falshood* and *Contradiction*?

Or what is there, that a *Mahomedan*, an *Infidel*, or the *Devil* himself would more rejoice in?

Those, who are Friends to the *Gospel of Christ*, endeavour to harmonize its *Doctrines*, and make the whole *Scheme* consistent with itself, and at the same *Time*, consistent with the *Principles of right Reason*.

And to serve this good Purpose, tho' we allow, that there is no such Thing as *absolute Merit* in the whole *human Species*, and that all had been lost Creatures without a *Saviour*: Yet we must contend that there is *comparative Merit*, Comparison being made between

tween Man and Man. Some Men are better than others, and this Difference in the Behaviour of Men is Virtue and Vice. It is blasphemous to say, that God makes no Distinction between Virtue and Vice, or that he does not love Virtue and hate Vice. But if he love Virtue, there must be something in Virtue naturally amiable, and that is Merit, not absolute Merit indeed, but human Merit; Merit in one Man above another: Otherwise the *Wicked* would have as good a Title to Salvation as the *Good*: But our Saviour has expressly declared, "Not every one, that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven. Matth. vii. 21. And in another Place, Matth. xvi. 27. The Son of Man shall come in the Glory of his Father with his Angels, and then he shall reward every Man according to his Works".

What *Blasphemy* then and *Impiety* are those Wretches guilty of, who in their diabolical *Pbrenzy*, dare to contradict our Saviour's Authority, and that too in a Passage which comprehends such an essential Article of Religion, as the Judgment of the World? Our SAVIOUR expressly declares the Works of Men to be the *Object* of his Judgment; the *Matter* of his *Consideration*, or *Attention*, before he rewards or saves them: But the *Methodist*, for the Perdition of the Souls of his Fol-

Followers, *openly* gives our Saviour the Lie, and says that the Works of Men are of no *Consideration* at all: This open Contradiction to the clear and express Words of our Saviour is openly to blaspheme the Name of Christ. Will you as *Christians* of any *Denomination* encourage the open Blasphemers of the Name of *Christ*? If you will; yet surely you are perswaded there is a God, and as People *concerned for the Being and Honour of God*, you should consider.

Thirdly, That tho' our Saviour be of no Credit, or Authority with these People, if set in Competition with their own Teachers; or if he be of no personal Credit with the rest of the World: Yet the Matter of the Doctrine here advanced, concerning the Nature of a future Judgment, is of such Moment to all Religion, that to contradict it destroys the essential Attributes of God, and ruins his Character as Judge of the World.

For, I. If there be no *Distinction* between human Actions, or a *Distinction* of no *Consideration*, then there can be no such Thing as *Good*, or *Evil*: and consequently no Room for a future Judgment at all. For where there is no Law broken, there is no Harm done; and therefore no Call for Judgment.

But *Secondly*, If there be a real Distinction between Good and Evil; then to say that

B. God

God does not *regard* it, or take it into *Consideration*, but rewards or punishes at random, is making him so foolish as not to distinguish Vice from Virtue; or so unjust as to prefer Vice before it; which Deficiency would render him quite unfit to be the Judge of the World.

In the first Place therefore, according to this Doctrine, we are to have no *Judgment* of the World at all.

In the next Case—God is represented as *unfit* to be that *Judge*.

Now if this be not downright *Atheism*, I would be glad to know what is. Where such Doctrines are propagated it behoves you,

Fourthly, to weigh well what you are about, lest you should be considered by the State, as aiding and abetting their Propagation.

Because that may be offensive to GOVERNMENT. *Atheism* has been deemed a *capital* Crime, and Atheists in some Countries have been put to Death, as Persons very dangerous to a State, at least in the Opinion of those, who govern it.

For you must know, that all wise *Law-givers* and good *Magistrates*, beside that they resent

resent the Dishonour done to God, consider the Propagation of Atheism as an Attempt to destroy their own *Commonwealth*. Because by releasing Men from their natural Fears of a Deity, it discharges them from all *moral Obligation*; makes Room for all Manner of *Vice* and *Villainy*; by which Means the Bands of Society are dissolved, the *Community* is forced to separate; and the *Magistrates* themselves, when all *Government* is overturned, can in that *Character* subsist no longer.

You see then, that this Attempt must be considered as a Sort of *Treason* by Magistrates; because it is an Attack upon themselves: by ruining their Subjects it takes away their very Office; there being, as I observed, no Place for Governors in a Society quite dissolute and abandoned.

This then is the Consequence of destroying the Morals of a State, by the Introduction of *direct Atheism*: And therefore to secure the Morals of their People, Magistrates make Use of that Instrument which we call Religion, as being in their Opinion what will contribute most to harmonize and regulate Society, and produce Effects quite opposite to those, which they dread from Atheism.

But if any Form of Religion discourages Morality, it can be no Instrument for their

B 2 Purpose,

Purpose, because it does the Work of Atheism. And therefore they must be as much alarmed at the Introduction of such a Religion, as at the Introduction of Atheism ; and look upon it in the same Light, as it is attended with the same Consequences.

Now then in this Place, once more consider ; whether as good Subjects of this Realm, you can openly be concerned in propagating a Doctrine, which not only ends in *Atheism*, when pursued to the Extent of it's Meaning, but which, if that Meaning be not so apparent to the *Vulgar*, is yet considered by the MAGISTRATE as having the same Tendency.

These important *Articles* being first proposed to your Consideration, I now appeal to you.

Fifthly, In the last *Character*, I mentioned that of People of common Prudence.

You must imagine, that some of the Government or Magistracy of the Realm, are by their Office concerned to look to the Fulfilment, or due Execution of all publick Trusts. For in all well regulated States, there are Officers of one Denomination or another, appointed for this Purpose, and there are in all Places some *Bystanders*, to observe whether such Duties be performed or not.

Where

Where there is a palpable *Failure*, these may be apt to call your *Honour in Question*; and charge you with acting a very *ungenerous Part*, in accepting a *Trust*, in Order to betray it; namely by putting into an Office, which should be held by a *Minister* of the Church of ENGLAND, an *Enemy*, who shall undermine not only the *legal Establishment* of that *Church*, but also the very Foundations of all Religion: When at the same Time, the *Donor* of this LECTURE, by the Terms of his Will, expects from your Hands a Person, that should defend and support both the one and the other.

These Accusations or Murmuring of the *Bystanders* may possibly be carried to the particular *Magistrate*, or *Inspector*, to whom the STATE has committed the Regulation of such Matters: Your Characters may then be subject to his *Censure*, as well as to the *Complaints* of the PEOPLE. For it is the Duty of all Magistrates to take Care in their several Departments of what, we call, the *Constitution*.

To prevent the Danger, that may arise to it from the Admission of such *as are given to change*, or disposed to be *tumultuous*, there are certain Qualifications required of all publick Teachers, before they are by Law permitted to speak to the People. Every

PREACHER

PREACHER of the *established* Church is to be licensed by the Bishop: And every *Lecturer* in particular, under the Seal of the *Archbishop* or *Bishop*; he is moreover to conform to such and such *Declarations* and *Subscriptions*, and bring with him *LETTERS Testimonial*, wherein among other Things, it must be certified by *Clergymen* of the *established* Church, "That from their Personal Knowledge, he has never *held* or *published* any Thing, but what the Church of *England* approves of, and maintains"— And what *Orthodox Clergymen* will certify this of a *Methodist*?

The Lord Bishop of *London* in this Case will be the *ecclesiastical JUDGE or INSPECTOR*; and as his *LORDSHIP* has by no Means the Character of a Person, who is likely to *betray* the Interest of the Church, in which he *presides as Bishop*: Do you think he will admit into the *Office* of a *LECTURER*, an *Office*, which in this *Metropolis* has many Times been *dangerous*, a Person of a *Character* so opposite, as that of *Methodist* to the *Peace* and *Order* of the *established* Church, and so justly to be suspected by *thinking Men* of every other *Form* of Religion.

You have Reason then to apprehend that in the last Issue your *Methodist Teacher* may be rejected by the Bishop; for which you your selves may incur some *Censure*, for troubling him

him with so ill a Choice. For which, perhaps the best Excuse you can make will be, " That you had unwarily promised an *Acquaintance*, with whom, you had some *Dealings*, or private *Interest*, that you would, at all *Adventures* be serviceable to such a Person".—GENTLEMEN the careless or ill *Disposal* of *Publick Places* is the *Bane* of this Kingdom.—Consider, therefore, whether there be such an *Obligation* in this Promise, as shall compel you to be Partakers in the Guilt of doing this Kind of *Publick Hurt*.

If at the Instance of a Friend, you had chanced to promise to lend a Sum of Money to a Brother Tradesman, whom, upon Enquiry, you had found not to be quite so honest in his *Principles*, as you might expect at first, I believe, you would not be much inclined to stick to a Promise made thus upon a *false Supposition* of a Man's *Integrity*; nor would your *Friend*, upon better Information, require it of you.—That Friend can with as little Reason require it here, and as it is a Rule in Religion, *to do as we would be done by*, the PUBLICK have a Right to expect, that you would do for them, what in the like Circumstances, you would do for yourselves; that is, depart from a Promise precipitately made, and upon a *very bad Foundation*.

That

That I have not presumed too far, by *supposing* it possible, that to People in your Case this may be the Conduct of the present Bishop of *London*, I leave you to judge for yourselves, by shewing you in what *Light* the *Doctrines* and *Practices* of the Methodists were considered by the late Bishop *Gibson*, the immediate Predecessor of your present excellent *Diocesan*.

The great Preservative of Religion (said his Lordship) and of Order and Regularity in the Exercise of it, is the Provision that is made for the Performance of Publick Offices by Persons lawfully appointed within particular Bounds and Districts; and if these be broken down, nothing can follow but Disorder and Confusion. This Nation, in the Time of our Forefathers, had sufficient Experience of the Mischief and Contempt that may be brought upon Religion, by inspired Tongues and itching Ears; ‘When the Holy Spirit was alledged, to sanctify the greatest Extravagancies and the most ridiculous Fancies; ‘When the most ordinary Actions and Incidents of Life, were ascribed to the Influences of the same Spirit; ‘When the Doctrine of Justification by Faith alone was carried into an utter Exclusion of the Necessity of good Works, and, under that Notion, grew to be the Distinguishing Mark of a whole *

* Antinomians.

Sect

Sect; and When the Bounds of Order and Discipline were broken down, and the settled Ministries and Offices of the Church depreciated and brought into Contempt, as Dispensations of a low and less spiritual Nature.

The aiming at high Flights in Religion, and depreciating the *ordinary* Methods of maintaining and propagating it, looks speciously, and will never want Admirers and Followers. But surely, an Endeavour to raise Religion to greater Heights and greater Abstractions from common Life, than Christ and his Apostles made and designed it, is attended with mischievous Consequences; from what Principle soever it proceeds, or with what Degrees of Zeal soever it may be accompanied. Some it draws from their proper Business, which God has required them to attend, and heats them by Degrees into a Kind of religious Frenzy, and seldom fails to lead them into *spiritual Pride* and an inward Contempt of the Generality of their Fellow-Christians, as of a *low* Size in Religion, compared with themselves. And others are naturally led by it, to think it *impossible* for them to attain those *Heights* in which Religion is made to consist, and to give over all Thoughts of being religious at all. With this latter View it was, that a zealous Advocate for Infidelity, some Years since, made it his Business to represent Christianity, and the Duties of it, as of such an *exalted* Nature, as might discour-

C rage

rage the Generality of People from aiming at it, or thinking of it; in order to persuade them to take the same free and unrestrained Enjoyment of this World, than he himself was known to do. Whereas, nothing is more certain, than that the Christian Religion is calculated for *common Life*, for Low as well as High, for Poor as well as Rich; and that (as I observed before) one great Part of the *Exercise of Religion*, is an honest and diligent Discharge of the Busines of our several Stations; out of a Sense of Duty to God who has placed us in them, and in the Hope of a future State of Happiness which he has promised as the Reward of our dutiful Compliance with his Appointment. If it were otherwise, Christ would have introduced into the World a new Religion no ways suitable to the general Situation and Circumstances of Mankind, and have required such a Course of Duty, as the greatest Part of them are in no *Condition* to discharge.

There is a remarkable Passage in a late Journal, which seems to carry in it a great deal of that Kind of *Discouragement*, which I have been speaking of. It is Word for Word as follows:

“ I write this, to shew how far a Man
“ may go, and yet know nothing of Jesus
“ Christ

“ Christ. † Behold here was one * who constantly attended on the Means of Grace, exact in his Morals, humane and courteous in his Conversation, who gave much in Alms, was frequent in private Duties; and yet, till about six Weeks ago, as destitute of any saving experimental Knowledge of Jesus Christ, as those on whom his Name was never called, and who still sit in Darkness and the Shadow of Death.”

How it could be, that a professed Christian who constantly attended *the Means of Grace*, and was *frequent in private Duties*, did, all that while, *know nothing of Jesus Christ*, is beyond my Comprehension: And I am much at a Loss to understand, what was that *saving experimental Knowledge of Jesus Christ*, for want of which he could only be reckoned among *Heathens and Infidels*. We ought also to have been acquainted with the Circumstances of the *sudden Illumination*, by which that Knowledge is supposed to have been conveyed; to enable us to judge to what *Cause or Influence* it ought to be ascribed. There is no Doubt, but God, when he pleases, can work upon the Minds of Men by extraordinary Influences; but so long as there is no *Testimony* of their being the immediate Work of God, but the whole rests, in this and other like Cases, upon the Imagination and Persuasion of the Person or Persons concerned.

† Journ. III. p. 81, 82. * Mr. Seward

ed ; Others who cannot see the Heart nor the inward Operations upon it, must be excused, if they consider it as *Enthusiasm* and *Delusion*, till they see reasonable Grounds for considering it in any other Light.

This Case may seem to bear some Resemblance to the Conversion of *Cornelius* as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, but differs from it in three important Points ; the first, that we are there very certain, because the Scripture has expressly told us, that the whole Affair of conveying the Knowledge of Jesus Christ to *Cornelius*, was ordered and carried on, under the immediate Direction and Guidance of God ; the second, that the Person whose Ministry God was pleased to make use of, was St. *Peter*, an Apostle of Christ, and whose divine Mission and Inspiration were both unquestionable ; and the third, that the Conveyance of the Holy Ghost was testified by an outward and sensible Evidence, namely, the *Gift of Tongues*.

These are Things, which I thought proper to be laid before you at this Time, as well in Discharge of my own Duty, as out of a hearty Concern for your Safety in the great Affair of your Souls. And as I doubt not but you will consider them with all the Attention and Impartiality which Matters of that great Importance deserve, so I shall not fail to make it my earnest Prayer to God, that

[[21 ~]]

that he will be graciously pleased to preserve you from all Error, and particularly, from the two dangerous Extremes, of *Lukewarmness*, on one Hand, and *Enthusiasm* on the other. To his Blessing and Direction I recommend you, and remain.

Fulham,
Aug. 1, 1739.
*Your Faithful Friend,
and Pastor.*

Edm'. London.

After such a *Remonstrance* as this, I should think Gentlemen, that you have a Right to demand back your *Liberty of Choice*, and to insist upon your *Independence*. But if this cannot be done: *Providence*, I hope, will not be wanting to disappoint the *Arts* and *Schemes* of a crafty *Enthusiast*, and deliver you from your present *Embarassment*, by preserving the *Life* of Mr. B—n.

I am,

GENTLEMEN,

With most sincere Regard,

Your hearty well-wisher,

And humble Servant,

Southwark, Ap, 5.
1758.

JOHN FREE.

P. S.

P.S. To the Publick.

As the Author foresees, that the Self-sufficiency and Ignorance of many of the low People among the Methodists may prompt them to shew their Skill in Divinity, and change a Word with him upon this Occasion: To save these Gentlemen a needless Trouble, he thinks proper to DECLARE; that if either of the Mr. Wesleys, who still pass under that Denomination, have any Exceptions to make to what is here advanced, provided those Exceptions be drawn up, as he has set the Example, in as short a Compass as the Nature Controversy will admit, the Manner, in which all wise and good People, would choose to manage a Religious Dispute; he will reply to those Objections, appearing under their Name and acknowledged to be theirs, as fairly and candidly as they can expect it from any Man differing in Opinion from themselves: But for the Rest of the Combatants now ready to run a Tilt, as he thinks it much better for them to stick to their several Trades, he reserves to himself the Liberty of judging; how far it may be decent for him, to concern himself with such Antagonists, even tho' they should set their Names to their Performances: And if he passes them over in profound Silence, the Publick may conclude, that he thinks them entirely beneath his Notice: And for

for the Propriety of this his Conduct, he will submit to the Judgment of any able Divines, who are regular in their Way, tho' they chance to be of a different Perswasion from himself.

T H E E N D.



Other Books, which have been written by the Rev.
Mr. DR. FARR, and sold by William Sandby, at the
Ship, opposite St. Dunstan's Church, in Fleet-
Street.

HISTORY of the English Tongue, with the
Author's intended Dedication to his Royal
Highness Prince GEORGE; now Prince of Wales, PART. I.
printed in 1749, and containing an Account,

I. Of the Roman or Latin Tongue, as once spoken
in Britain.

II. Of the British or Welsh, and it's antient, and pre-
sent Limits.

III. Of the Pythas, corruptly called Picts, by the
ROMANS; their Settlement in the North of
BRITAIN; the Original of their NAME, and
the Nature, Extent, and Duration of their
LANGUAGE.

IV. Of the Scots from Ireland; and the Extent of
the Erse Language; in order to distinguish it
from the English in the North of BRITAIN,
which vulgarly passes under the Name of
Broad Scotch.

2. A Volume of SERMONS preached before the Uni-
versity of Oxford, printed in 1750. With a Preface tend-
ing to reform some remarkably bad Practices, both in
Church and State; to the Neglect of which, we prin-
cipally owe our present Misfortunes.

3. Political SERMONS, and DISCOURSES, collected
into one Volume, under the Title of the Sentiments of a
true ANTIGALLICAN; and dedicated to his Royal High-
ness the DUKE, 1756.

4. A second ANTIGALLICAN Sermon preached in the
Year 1756, upon the Terms of National Unanimity: With
a Genealogical Table, shewing his MAJESTY's antient
Connexions, with the Crowns of these Kingdoms, long
antecedent in Time, to the Marriage of his Ancestor with
the Steward Family.

5. POEMS upon several Occasions, the second Edition
1757; containing an ODE to the King of Prussia, an ODE
of Consolation to his R. H. the DUKE. Jephtha an Orato-
rio set to Musick by Mr. STANLEY. Advice to the
Fair Sex, &c.

